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Review of Festival Ultima II, Nevers, 1-2 june 1996

After 2 days hitchhiking problems, getting lost of the highway at Ruhr, suddenly finding myself in Amsterdam, getting stuck at a petrolstation near Orleans, I made it to Nevers about 15 minutes before the doors opened.

10 bands performed, here is my impression of these bands. Each band will be rated with 1-5 earplugs for the audial and goggles for the visual impression respectively. 1 for a bad performance, 5 for an excellent performance.

Saturday.

The Revolutionary Amry of the Infant Jesus.
I had never before heard of this Liverpool band, and as they opened the gig, I found myself in the middle of a performance with a mixture of films, slides cool ligths where several layers were used and the band was located somewhere inbetween these layers. Her voice was magnificant and she was one of these artists who both sing well and handles multiple instruments. The music was - as I recall it - a mixture of ethical, folk and ambience, but I do not recall details. They appeared to have nerves and the breaking down of the scene at end seemed a bit more chaotic than it should have been. I have the impression that they are excellent on a studio version and something I will check out in the future.

(Earplugs: 3, Goggles: 4)

Soldnergeist.
'Total Media Control' was written on three man tall crosses on the stage, and behind was a table with electronic equipment. A screen had some japanese cartoon running. The noise from the two ppl was absolutely well made and worth the listening, but neither their stage performance nor the movie in the background was interesting, and in parts seemed a bit embarrassing aka 'Lets find a way to perform.' - whereafter the stage performance made the show worse than it would without anything.

(Earplugs: 3, Goggles: 1)

Daniel Menche

Silence... Daniel Menche, an odd looking american, only missing his cowboy hat walks in... silence.. The red light... I see the bowl of sand... Silence... He falls over the sand... NOISE... It is itching..... noise in layers... Just Noise... Daniel - You just did it. I am impressed.

(Earplugs: 5, Goggles: 5)

Raison D'etre
I was pretty worried about this perrormance, since everyone was looking forward for it - maybe except me, as I had my doubts about RD performing

live. Anyway, I found my seat. After 20 minutes I left the show. To many things reminded me of when I had Morthound playing live: To much DAT, a video which was uninteresting and for me it looked like RD was sitting on the stage reading a boring book with a flashlight. I am sorry.. I left because I like RD and will look forward to play his music just as often as I usually do. RD's music is for the CD player, not for a live performance, unless as ambience in a church, planetarium or something else.

(Earplugs 3+, Goggles 1)

Telepherique
German ambient at its best. I came a bit late for this gig as I went out for a shave and a 'francaise cuisine'. I was able to see the last three songs. I felt myself in a nature with lots of ambience and still some noise. The Video manifested the ambience and they made a good wholeness. I was told the beginning was noisy, but a must have missed that part. The three ppl worked concentrated. I positive experience.

(Earplugs: 3, Goggles: 3)

Schloss Tegal

Satuday ended with a strange band. I found myself in noise and ambience. I think I fell asleep but cannot remember fully as I was comfortably numb. Parts reminded me of a Hafler Trio / DarkAmbience crossover. The video was a well made video collage I would like to see again.

(Earplugs: 4, Goggles 4?)

Sunday:

O-Yoki Conjugate + Sons of Silence = S.P.O.K.E.
I was really looking forward to see YOC, and they turned out to so a really good show. 3 mountain bikes on the stage with contact microphones, and a well made ambient music made from these bikes. Daniel of YOC added the ambiences well programmed dub and drums, and the additional sax and primitive blowing instruments was the sprice to this performance. Even a 'rock' song appeared.

(earplugs: 4, goggles: 4)

Batchas & friends
I have never heard of Batchas, but thier performance made me purchase one of their releases from noise Museum (a package in beachsand). They started their gig with water dripping into two buckets, and they had one of the most relaxing (dark) ambient appearances at the festival. Yes, I fell asleep and I woke up happy as ever.
(earplugs: 4, goggles: 3)

Co-Caspar
Imagine a 50 years old guy working as an invertor. That was how I felt this art performance. The repeating 'On the next beep it is...', followed by a man cutting off his mask but a machete. Odd instruments hanging from the roof, vacuum cleaners with rubber gloves and his absoulety excellent performance, though he once in a while appeared a bit absent minded. Musically, I did not really understand what was going on, but his performance was brilliant.

(earplugs:?, goggles: 5).
The music is far to different for me to give it earplugs...

Current 93
I guess most people came to Nevers because of Tibets appearance. - And I must say, he gave what people expected. I was delighted by his stage appearance and his humor. His songs were mainly from TMP, Of Ruine and all the pretty horses. He ended the show with an excellent version of lucifer over london, with Julie Woods and son backing hi, up with bells. Michael Cashmore proved to be an excellent guitar player, whereas Karl Blake (?) tended to lag a bit with the bas. I hope I will see C93 once again, it was worth hitch-hiking 2000 km for this.

(earplugs: 4, goggles: 3)

That was all. I will thank all the people I met at the place and noise Museum for this initiative. I hope I will be able to be there next year...

Darkblue And Camilla (with the green hair)

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